

Overview

The Department of Criminal Justice Services, through the use of Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) funding, will contract with Dr. Ed Latessa and the University of Cincinnati to provide an assessment of intervention programs available in rural areas. The University of Cincinnati will use the Evidence Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) and other processes to determine how closely existing programs meet known principles of effective intervention.

The CPC is divided into two basic areas, content and capacity. The content area will focus on the extent to which the programs meet the principles of risk, need, responsibility and treatment. The capacity area will measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions and services for offenders. There are a total of seventy-seven indicators, worth up to 83 total points, that are scored during the assessment. The scores from each area will be rated from highly effective to ineffective. Please note: not all of the five domains are given equal weight and some may be considered “not applicable”, in which case they are not included in the scoring.

To begin the evaluation The University of Cincinnati staff will schedule structured interviews with selected staff and program participants, and conduct observations of groups and services to collect data. Other sources of information may be collected by using surveys, policy and procedure manuals, schedules, treatment materials, a curriculum and other sources as requested. Once the information is gathered and reviewed the program is scored and a report is generated highlighting the strengths, areas that need improvement, and recommendations for each of the five areas.

According to the University of Cincinnati the CPC has been found to be correlated with reductions in recidivism and it provides a measure of program integrity and quality. For more information on the CPC, please see **Attachment A**.

Guidelines

The DCJS is issuing a request for applications (RFA) from rural areas in Virginia interested in having an assessment of the juvenile justice intervention programs available in their localities. Localities will be selected through a competitive process. Applicants must be a unit of local government and must have a signature from the County Administrator and all Agency Directors involved.

Applicants must be rural areas of local government. To ensure compliance with the evaluators all Agency Directors involved must provide a signature of agreement on the attached memorandum of agreement. **See Attachment B**.

The Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) requires subgrantees to report all mandatory outcomes and outputs based on the specified program areas.

Successful applicants will submit performance measures data collected for the specified program areas. Data must be submitted to the DCJS no later than November 15, 2008. For more information on JABG Performance Measures please visit the link attached <http://jabg.nttac.org/pmupdated.cfm>

Please note: This is a county-wide assessment. Agencies will not be assessed individually. Attached (**Attachment C**) is a suggested letter to distribute to participating agencies describing the process with a little more detail.

Submission Requirements

All applications must include:

- Face Sheet (**Attachment D**). All areas on the face sheet must be completed in full.
- A list of programs to be evaluated to include the agency that oversees the program, the number of referrals made to the program, and the types of services that are provided by each program.
- A brief description of what services/areas you wish to have researched.
- A documentation of need- provide information that supports the need for the CPC.
- A summary of how the information obtained from the CPC will be used in your locality.
- A memorandum of agreement (**Attachment B**), signed by the director or designee of all agencies involved.

Applications will be due to DCJS no later than September 21, 2007 at 4:30pm. Submissions by fax transmittal and electronic mail will NOT be accepted. Applications should be mailed to: The Department of Criminal Justice Services; Attn: Grants Administration 10th floor; 202 North Ninth Street; Richmond, VA 23219. Hand delivered applications should be delivered to the 5th floor.

Applicants will be notified by October 15, 2007. Successful applicants should prepare to begin working with the University of Cincinnati staff immediately upon notification.

At the end of the assessment a final report of the evaluation will be made available to the locality, to the DCJS, the Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and others upon requests.

For technical assistance please contact Ashaki McNeil, Program Analyst, DCJS at (804) 225-4329, ashaki.mcneil@dcjs.virginia.gov

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE BASED CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM CHECKLIST

The Evidence Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) is a tool we developed for assessing correctional intervention programs,¹ and is used to ascertain how closely correctional programs meet known principles of effective intervention. Several recent studies conducted by the University of Cincinnati on both adult and juvenile programs were used to develop and validate the indicators on the CPC. These studies found strong correlations with outcome between both domain areas and individual items (Holsinger, 1999; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2003, Lowenkamp, 2003; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005a; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2005b). We have also conducted over 400 program assessments across the country and have developed a large database on correctional intervention programs.²

The CPC is divided into two basic areas: content and capacity. The capacity area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains in the capacity area including: Leadership and Development, Staff, and Quality Assurance. The content area focuses on the substantive domains of Offender Assessment and Treatment, and the extent to which the program meets the principles of risk, need, responsivity and treatment. There are a total of seventy-seven indicators, worth up to 83 total points that are scored during the assessment. Each area and all domains are scored and rated as either "highly effective" (65% to 100%); "effective" (55% to 64%); "needs improvement" (46% to 54%); or "ineffective" (45% or less). The scores in all five domains are totaled and the same scale is used for the overall assessment score. It should be noted that not all of the five domains are given equal weight, and some items may be considered "not applicable," in which case they are not included in the scoring.

Data are collected through structured interviews with selected program staff and program participants, and observation of groups and services. In some instances surveys may also be used to gather additional information. Other sources of information include policy and procedure manuals, schedules, treatment materials, manuals, and curriculums, a review of a sample of case files and other selected program materials. Once the information is gathered and reviewed the program is scored, and a report is generated which highlights the strengths, areas that need improvement, and recommendations for each of the five areas. Program scores are also compared to the average from across all programs that have been assessed.

There are several advantages to the CPC. First, it is applicable to a wide range of programs (adult, juvenile, community, institutional, etc.). Second, all of the indicators included in the CPC have been found to be correlated with reductions in recidivism.

¹ The CPC is modeled after the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory developed by Gendreau and Andrews, however, the CPC includes a number of items not contained in the CPAI. In addition, items were deleted that were not found to be positively correlated with recidivism.

² Several versions of the CPAI were used prior to the development of the CPC. Scores and averages have been adjusted as needed.

Attachment A

Third, the process provides a measure of program integrity and quality; it provides insight into the “black box” of a program, something that an outcome study alone does not provide. Fourth, the results can be obtained relatively quickly; usually the process takes a day or two and a report is generated within a few weeks. Fifth, it identifies both the strengths and weaknesses of a program and provides recommendations designed to improve the integrity of the program and to increase effectiveness.

Types of programs that we have assessed include:

- Boot Camps
- Community Correctional Facilities
- Correctional Education Programs
- Day Reporting Centers
- Diversion Programs
- Group Homes
- Halfway Houses
- Intensive Supervision Units
- Institutional Sex Offender Programs
- Institutional Treatment Programs
- Jail Based Substance Abuse Programs
- Outpatient Substance Abuse Programs
- Residential Correctional Programs for Parolees
- Residential Correctional Programs for Women
- Residential Substance Abuse Programs
- Residential Substance Abuse Programs for Habitual Drunk Drivers
- School Based Programs
- Sex Offender Programs
- Therapeutic Communities, both institutional and community based
- Work Release Facilities

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Edward J. Latessa, Ph.D.
Professor & Head
Center for Criminal Justice Research
Division of Criminal Justice
PO Box 210389
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH 45221-0389
513.556.5836
Fax: 513.556.3303
Email: Edward.Latessa@uc.edu
Web site: www.uc.edu/criminaljustice

References

Holsinger, A. M. (1999). *Opening the 'black box': Assessing the relationship between program integrity and recidivism*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Cincinnati.

Lowenkamp, C. T. (2003). *A Program Level Analysis of the Relationship Between Correctional Program Integrity and Treatment Effectiveness*. Doctoral Dissertation. University of Cincinnati.

Lowenkamp, C. T. and E. J. Latessa (2003). Evaluation of Ohio's Halfway Houses and Community Based Correctional Facilities. Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH.

----- (2005a). *Evaluation of Ohio's CCA Programs*. Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH.

----- (2005b). *Evaluation of Ohio's Reclaim Funded Programs, Community Correctional Facilities, and DYS Facilities*. Center for Criminal Justice Research, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH.

Memorandum of Agreement

To: Agency Directors

From: *(County Administrator)*

Re: Evaluation of juvenile justice programs

This memorandum serves as an agreement between **locality** and the Department of Criminal Justice Services. The University of Cincinnati will conduct an assessment of all juvenile justice intervention programs in my locality.

By signing this memorandum I agree to provide the necessary information to The University of Cincinnati, to include staff interviews, review of policy manuals, observations of groups and services and other sources of information as requested.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services reserve the right to have access to all data that are collected by the University of Cincinnati. Final evaluation reports will be available to each agency involved, the locality, the Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and others upon requests. DCJS reserves the right to the information obtained during the evaluation and may use the information for future reference without the permission of the agency involved.

Dear Program Director:

Locality Name community corrections will be undergoing a system-wide evaluation conducted by the Center for Criminal Justice Research at the University of Cincinnati. The purpose of this research project is to determine whether programs and other correctional services adhere to best practices based on the “what works” literature. The evaluation will include services delivered to juvenile offenders. The project has outlined the following goals:

- To profile the *Locality Name* Juvenile Justice System including the programs, services and juvenile offenders.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the *Locality Name* Juvenile Justice System.
- To assess selected programs and services offered by both private and public service providers in *Locality Name*.
- To make recommendations to improve existing services accessed or delivered by *Locality Name* Juvenile Justice System.

In order to meet the above goals, researchers from the University of Cincinnati will collect and analyze local data related to the current system. This data will be used to describe characteristics of *Locality Name* juvenile offenders. Likewise, stakeholders will be surveyed or interviewed to determine strengths and weaknesses of the current system. Finally, individual programs and services will be assessed via the Evidence-Based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC). Programs or services deemed inappropriate for assessment with this instrument will be incorporated into the overall system assessment. The CPC is an empirically derived instrument used to determine how closely correctional treatment programs meet the known principles of effective correctional interventions.

Your agency's cooperation in the system-wide assessment will help determine current strengths and weakness of the *Locality Name* juvenile justice system so that recommendations for improvement can be made. Involvement in the project may range from the completion of a survey to a 1-day site visit wherein your program is evaluated using the CPC. **The 1-day site visit would involve a series of interviews with the program director and key program staff, with questions about how treatment or services are delivered within the program.** A follow-up letter will be sent informing you of the level of assessment necessary to complete the system-wide evaluation. Individual programs will be given feedback regarding the results of a CPC, which will be contained in the appendix of the final report. A program or an individual's participation in the project is voluntary.

Grant Application Face Sheet

Applicant:	
Agencies Involved:	
Locality Size:	
Location of Region:	
Jurisdictions Served:	

	PROJECT DIRECTOR	PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR (must be County Administrator)
Name:		
Title:		
Address:		
Phone:		
Fax:		
Email:		